

Clarification on How the Military is Incorporated into Career Readiness

Kentucky's definition of career readiness takes into consideration three major skill areas: *core academic skills* and the ability to apply those skills to concrete situations in order to function in the workplace and in routine daily activities; *employability skills* (such as critical thinking and responsibility) that are essential in any career area; and *technical, job-specific skills* related to a specific career pathway. The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) took into consideration numerous research studies and testimony from industry leaders and professional associations when deciding how to best measure each of these skill sets.

The KBE chose to utilize the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and ACT WorkKeys assessments as a means of measuring the academic skills component of career readiness. These assessments provide insight into a student's foundational academic knowledge, especially in mathematics and English/language arts. What is unique about these assessments is the ability to demonstrate academic knowledge in context.

Measuring employability skills is often difficult; however, research studies indicate that successful completion of a program of study that infuses 21st century skills is one means of ensuring students have been provided opportunities of gaining skills most critical to workplace success. Thus, in order for a student to be eligible for career-ready status, he or she must achieve preparatory status within a career pathway sequence of courses. According to federal guidelines, a preparatory student is one who has earned two credits within a technical program and has entered the third credit-bearing course.

The technical skills are measured by either a Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards Assessment (KOSSA) or industry-recognized certificate. The official list of KOSSA and industry certificates can be found on the Kentucky Department of Education website:
<http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/CTE/kossa/Pages/ValidKOSSAList.aspx>.

The Kentucky Department of Education recognizes the military as a vital career pathway for students. The JROTC program of study provides students the opportunity to gain the employability and technical skills needed to advance in the pathway. Students that complete the required sequence of courses and master the competencies set forth in these courses receive a Certificate of Training. Thus, a student that is successful on the ASVAB and receives the JROTC Certificate of Training is career ready.

Kentucky must assure the student has the diverse skills needed to succeed in a career area. Enlistment in the military alone does not meet the college and career ready measures as approved by the Kentucky Board of Education. Enlistment alone does not provide students the opportunity while in high school to obtain the employability and technical skills needed to be successful in most careers. Simply landing a job, whether in the military or civilian world, does not provide enough indications the student is prepared with the skills needed to have long-term career opportunities. This concept is also applied to civilian careers. Simply landing a job in the civilian world does not indicate the student is prepared for a long-term career. Career readiness must focus on the critical learning and preparation that takes place while in high school.